



# 2026 Rules Volunteer Training

Session 3



# Agenda

- VSGA Pace of Play Policy
- Monitoring Pace of Play
- Timing
- Difficult Interactions



# VSGA Pace of Play Policy



# VSGA POP & Raguzzi



## VSGA Pace of Play Policy

### Alotted Time

The allotted time established by the Committee is the maximum amount of time a group should take to complete the play of each hole. This time is adjusted based on the difficulty of the course, travel time between holes, group size and ability of the field. A normal speed of play should result in completing play under the allotted time.

### Definition of "Out of Position"

The first group will be considered out of position if, at any time during the round, the group takes more than the allotted time as detailed above.

Any following group will be considered out of position if it is taking more than the allotted time and:

- i. reaches a par 3 hole that is clear of all play and all players in the preceding group have played their strokes on the teeing area of the next hole; or
- ii. reaches a par 4 or 5 hole which is clear of all play.

*Note: A group or player that is clearly playing at a pace that is slower than others in the field may be deemed by the Committee to be "Out of Position" even if the group is within the allotted time.*

### Communication with a Group that is Out of Position

Groups will be monitored throughout the round. If a group is out of position, the players in that group may be monitored more closely and timed. Prior to a group being timed, a referee will issue a verbal warning to the group between the play of two holes.

### Timing

When a group is being timed, each player in the group is expected to play all strokes within 40 seconds. Timing begins when it is the player's turn to play and nothing is obstructing his/her play. An extra 20 seconds will be given to:

- i. the first player to play a stroke on a hole;
- ii. the first to play a second shot on a par 4 or par 5;
- iii. the first player to play a third stroke on a par 5 (provided it is not played from on or within 10 yards of the putting green); or
- iv. the first player to play a stroke from within 10 yards of or on the putting green.

### Pace of Play Penalties

One bad time – *Warning*

A second bad time – *One stroke penalty*

A third bad time – *Additional two stroke penalty (three total)*

A fourth bad time – *Disqualification*

Note 1: Bad time(s) will remain with the player for the remainder of the round.

Note 2: A player is not exempt from penalty under Rule 5.6b simply because he/she takes less than the allotted time to complete a stroke, hole or round.

### Rules or Other Incidents

If a ruling or some other legitimate delay occurs which causes the group in question to lose its position, that group is expected to regain its position within a reasonable time.

## 2024 VSGA Amateur/State Open of Virginia Qualifier | Hidden Valley CC | Thu, June 6

Hole	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Turn Time	Hole	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Par	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	5	9 - 10:	Par	5	4	4	4	3	5	3	4	3
Time	15	15	13	15	19	15	13	15	15	18 - 1:	Time	15	13	19	15	15	14	19	15	15
Tee Time	Players	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
8:00 AM - Hole 1	Crosswhite/Messenger/	8:15	8:30	8:43	8:58	9:17	9:32	9:45	10:00	10:15	10:30	10:43	11:02	11:17	11:32	11:46	12:05	12:20	12:35	
8:10 AM - Hole 1	Miller/ /Hearp	8:25	8:40	8:53	9:08	9:27	9:42	9:55	10:10	10:25	10:40	10:53	11:12	11:27	11:42	11:56	12:15	12:30	12:45	
8:20 AM - Hole 1	Scott II/Draughn/Fishwick	8:35	8:50	9:03	9:18	9:37	9:52	10:05	10:20	10:35	10:50	11:03	11:22	11:37	11:52	12:06	12:25	12:40	12:55	
8:30 AM - Hole 1	Guzi/Gowen/Hall	8:45	9:00	9:13	9:28	9:47	10:02	10:15	10:30	10:45	11:00	11:13	11:32	11:47	12:02	12:16	12:35	12:50	1:05	
8:40 AM - Hole 1	Ramazzini/Vandyke/Shuck	8:55	9:10	9:23	9:38	9:57	10:12	10:25	10:40	10:55	11:10	11:23	11:42	11:57	12:12	12:26	12:45	1:00	1:15	
8:50 AM - Hole 1	Hodges/Regalla/Iroler	9:05	9:20	9:33	9:48	10:07	10:22	10:35	10:50	11:05	11:20	11:33	11:52	12:07	12:22	12:36	12:55	1:10	1:25	
9:00 AM - Hole 1	Sayers/Bond/Bright	9:15	9:30	9:43	9:58	10:17	10:32	10:45	11:00	11:15	11:30	11:43	12:02	12:17	12:32	12:46	1:05	1:20	1:35	
9:10 AM - Hole 1	Beck/Dull/Amaral	9:25	9:40	9:53	10:08	10:27	10:42	10:55	11:10	11:25	11:40	11:53	12:12	12:27	12:42	12:56	1:15	1:30	1:45	
9:20 AM - Hole 1	Zehnder/Arney/Bain	9:35	9:50	10:03	10:18	10:37	10:52	11:05	11:20	11:35	11:50	12:03	12:22	12:37	12:52	1:06	1:25	1:40	1:55	
9:30 AM - Hole 1	Bailey/Spangler/Orr	9:45	10:00	10:13	10:28	10:47	11:02	11:15	11:30	11:45	12:00	12:13	12:32	12:47	1:02	1:16	1:35	1:50	2:05	
9:40 AM - Hole 1	Aliff/Zhang/Harper	9:55	10:10	10:23	10:38	10:57	11:12	11:25	11:40	11:55	12:10	12:23	12:42	12:57	1:12	1:26	1:45	2:00	2:15	



# Allotted Time

- The time established by the committee for a group to play each hole.
- Time is based on course layout, group size, ability of field.
- Normal speed of play should result in under the time par.

Hole	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>Turn Time</u>
Par	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	5	9 - 10:
Time	15	15	13	15	19	15	13	15	15	18 - 1:
Hole	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>	
Par	5	4	4	4	3	5	3	4	3	
Time	15	13	19	15	15	14	19	15	15	



# Definition of “Out of Position”

- A group is considered out of position when:
  - Group takes more than the allotted time for the hole **AND**
    - **Par 3:** Hole is clear of all play and all players in group ahead have player their strokes from the teeing area on the next hole.
    - **Par 4 or 5:** Hole is clear of all play.

*Note: A group or player that is clearly playing at a pace that is slower than others in the field may be deemed by the committee to be “Out of Position” even if the group is within the allotted time.*



# Communication with a Group Out of Position

- Groups will be monitored throughout the round.
- If a group is out of position, the players in that group may be monitored more closely and timed.
- Prior to a group being timed, a referee will issue a verbal warning to the group between the play of two holes.



# Timing

- When a group is being timed, each player in the group is expected to play all strokes within 40 seconds. Timing begins when it is the player's turn to play and nothing is obstructing their play.
- An extra 20 seconds will be given to:
  - The first player to play a stroke on a hole;
  - The first to play a second shot on a Par 4 or Par 5;
  - The first player to play a third stroke on a Par 5 (except when only 10 yards away from the putting green)
  - The first player to play a stroke from within 10 yards of or on the putting green.



# Pace of Play Penalties

- One bad time – *Warning*
- A second bad time – *One stroke penalty*
- A third bad time – *Additional two stroke penalty (three total)*
- A fourth bad time – *Disqualification*
  - Note 1: Bad time(s) will remain with the player for the remainder of the round.
  - Note 2: A player is not exempt from penalty under Rule 5.6b simply because they take less the allotted time to complete a stroke, hole, or round.



# Rules or Other Incidents

- If a ruling or some other legitimate delay occurs which causes the group in question to lose its position, that group is expected to regain its position within a reasonable time.



# Questions





# Monitoring Pace of Play



# Timing and Pace of Play

## How We Spend Most of Our Time as Referees

- Managing the course
- Visibility
- Giving the message
- Stopwatch Timing – “On the Clock”





# Managing the Course

**When deciding if a group should be given a warning or placed on the clock, make sure you have a clear picture of the situation.**

- Why is the group out of position?
  - Long ruling
  - Ball search/Stroke-and-Distance
  - Slow play
  - Waiting on previous holes





# Managing the Course

## Communication

- Make sure to communicate with other referees that may have interacted with or observed the group.
  - Have they been spoken to before?
  - Do we give them one more hole before delivering a warning/putting them on the clock?
  - What does the next hole(s) look like?
  - How is this part of the course playing?





# Visibility

## **Before a Group has Received a Warning and is Not on the Clock**

- If you suspect that a group is behind and is likely to receive a warning, stay close (but not too close).
- Prepare to be in position to gather more information (flagstick time) and deliver the warning at the appropriate time.



# Visibility

## When a Group Has Received a Warning

- After a pace of play warning has been issued to a group, but before they are officially on the clock, referees should keep their distance from the players.
- However, using your presence can be an incentive for the group to speed up or remain aware that they have received a warning.
- The overall goal is to not interfere with play, but be available if the group needs help so they don't lose more time.



# Visibility

## When a Group is On the Clock

- Once a group has been informed that they are officially on the clock, the referee should make their presence known.
- Be up front and visible, but keeping your distance where you can clearly see what is happening and time appropriately.





# Visibility

## When a Group is On the Clock

- It may be necessary to leave your golf cart and walk toward the putting green or other area to be able to time players.
- Keep in mind that you do not want to be a distraction.





# Delivering the Message

## Clear and Concise Communication with Players

- Before giving a warning or putting a group on the clock, make sure to check in with the SMIC.
- **What to say?** - Stick to the facts. Explain policy if necessary.
  - “You are 6 minutes behind time par and out of position.”
- **When/Where to say it?** – Depends on the situation.
  - Warning vs. Bad Time
- **How to say it?**
  - Be concise, do not argue with the players.
  - Step out of the golf cart and remove sunglasses to deliver the message.



# Delivering the Message

## Be Prepared for Follow-Up Questions

- Most players are not expecting to receive a pace of play warning and may have follow-up questions.
  - Where is the group ahead?
  - Why are we on the clock since we waited on x hole?
  - We haven't seen the group behind us, we're not holding anyone up.



# Questions





# Timing



# Timing Players

## When to Start the Clock

- Generally, the clock is started when it is the player's turn to play.
- However, there may be times when it is unclear whose turn it is to play. In this situation, it is appropriate to give a short buffer until it is determined whose turn it is to play.





# Timing Players

## When to Start the Clock

- Players need to be able to play without interference or distraction.
  - Allowing a previous shot to come to rest
  - Allowing other players to move out of the way
    - For example, you would not start timing a player on the putting green until other players around their line of putt have marked their balls or moved out of the way, even if it is technically the player's turn to play.



# Timing Players

## When to Start the Clock

- When it is the player's turn to play and there are no distractions, the clock should start. This includes the player's actions before and during a practice routine, such as:
  - Club selection
  - Yardage determination
  - Walking up to survey their line
  - Chatting with their caddie about the shot
  - Surveying their line behind the ball
  - Practice swings





# Timing Players

## When to Pause or Restart the Clock

- There are certain times when it may be appropriate to pause or even restart the clock.
- For a short or small distraction, such as a big gust of wind or another small distraction, you may just need to pause the clock to allow the player to reset.
- Once the distraction has passed, continue timing.



# Timing Players

## When to Start the Clock

- For a larger distraction, such as a disruption in front of the player, you may need to restart the clock.
- It is not a perfect science on when to pause vs. restart the clock.
- Use your best judgement!

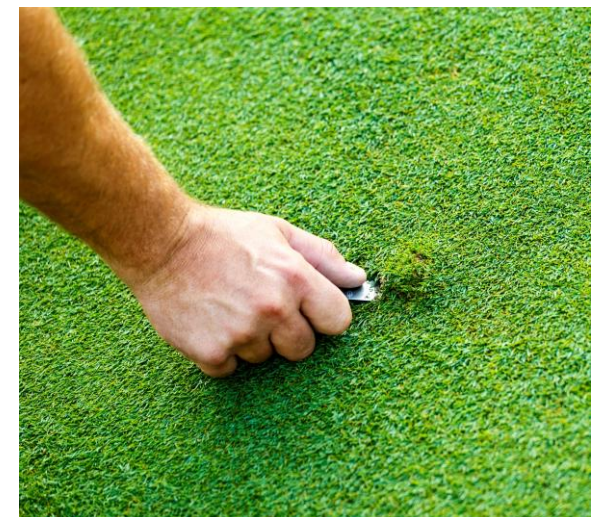




# Timing Players

## Pausing the Clock on the Putting Green

- When timing on the putting green, actions allowed under Rule 13.1 are not included in the timing of a player's stroke, provided the player is not unreasonable delaying play.
  - Repairing damage on the putting green
  - Removing loose impediments
  - Marking the golf ball
  - Replacing the golf ball





# Practice

- One timing situation in this video
- The putting green is clear as the player appears from the right of the screen
- This player is the first to play her second shot





# Practice

- Six timing situations in this video
- First player to play is chipping and may play without distraction as video begins





# Practice

- Three timing situations in this video
- The green is clear and the first player to arrive (dark slacks) has the honor





# Questions





# Difficult Interactions



# Difficult Interactions - Overview

## Types of Difficult Interactions

- Unhappy Players
- Caddie/Others Interference
- Issuing Penalties
- Second Opinions
- Scoring Area





# Difficult Interactions – Unhappy Players

When first approaching a situation with a clearly unhappy player, the initial engagement can change everything.

- Stay neutral, calm, open
- Ask questions
- Why is the player upset? Is it because of a Rules issue, another player, or some other conflict?
- De-escalate the situation
- If it cannot be resolved immediately, suggest calling for a second opinion or talking about it more in scoring.



# Difficult Interactions – Caddie/Other Interference

## Player Focus

- Information from caddies, spectators and others can be helpful and necessary.
- Caddies have the same interest of the players – be aware of that.
- Unsolicited or “extra” interactions can escalate a situation.
- Making caddie or other person feel heard – so that they back off.
- Calmly “removing” the other person from the conversation.



# Difficult Interactions – Issuing Penalties

- No one is excited to give or get a penalty.
- Lead with the facts of the situation.
- Make it clear that it isn't subjective and facts/actions led to the penalty.
- Once the penalty has been issued and the conflict is resolved, get away from the ruling.
- Further or longer discussions can be had in scoring.



# Difficult Interactions – Second Opinions

- OK to call in a second opinion.
- Sometimes necessary for player to hear it from someone else, even when ruling is clear.
- Once second referee arrives, you can go – do not linger, the ruling is now theirs.
- The second referee already knows how you ruled, otherwise they would not have been called in.





# Difficult Interactions – Scoring Area

In the scoring area, a referee may be called in to have different types of conversations with players:

- **To resolve a known conflict** – such as a POP penalty discussion, a player who played two balls, or any other Rules issue the player addresses in scoring.
- **Committee heard of a potential issue and must sort through the facts** – such as second-hand evidence from a spectator or other player about a potential Rules breach.
- **Committee is approaching player with evidence of a definite breach of the Rules** – Referee witnessing a breach.



# Difficult Interactions – Scoring Area

- Make sure the VSGA Staff members on site is aware of the situation before players get to scoring.
- A VSGA Staff member should take the lead with involved committee members for any of these situations.
- It might be necessary to find a quiet, private place to have conversation with players.





# Difficult Interactions

## When You Make a Wrong Ruling

- Admit the mistake
  - We've all done it – you have to move forward
- Get to the player
  - Correct it if not too late
- Next steps may depend on
  - the nature of the wrong ruling, or
  - the visibility of the situation
- Make sure Committee is informed and aligned





# Questions





# On-Course Half Day Training

**Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup> – Lakeside Park Club**

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